LOCAL SUBJECTS.

CARDAMOM HILLS DISTRICT.

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59. Modification of the procedure adopted for the collection of tax in the Peermade district.

Mr. H. C. Westaway (Member, Central Travancore Planters' Association) said that the manner in which the taxes were collected in the Peermade district caused great trouble and annoyance to the Planters. It was chiefly due to the circumstance that, while the accounts were kept in one office, payments had to be made through another. Demands for tax were not infrequently made on the original owner even long after he had sold his estate. In one instance, coercive processes were taken for the recovery of tax even though the dues had been fully paid. At present, the accounts were maintained in the office of the Dewan Peishkar, Kottayam, while payments were made to the Superintendent of the Cardamom Hills. In view to save further complications, the Member requested that orders might be issued for all accounts being maintained by the Superintendent in future.

Dewan's reply.—The matter will be considered.

60. Opening of Liquor shops in the vicinity of Planters' Estates.

Mr. H. C. Westaway (Member, Central Travancore Planters' Association) referred to the great increase of drunkenness of late in the Peermade district. On Sundays, that is, market days, it was impossible to walk along the Government road without meeting coolies reeling and staggering about. There had been instances in which Europeans were insulted, and, in one instance, a lady had stones thrown at her. It was also hard that the coolies should thus squander their weekly allowance of cash on drink instead of buying eatables for the coming week. The sufferers were the poor women and children. He said that, on the 8th November 1904, his Association received a promise from Government that no new arrack taverns would be sanctioned without first obtaining their views, but the promise was not fulfilled, as the one at the Maimallay Ghat and also the one at Kuttikanum near the Residency had been re-opened. When the Planters complained against the re-opening of the shops, they were informed that nothing could be done till the close of 1084. During the last month, the Meenachil Abkari Officer visited Peermade with seven open licenses and issued them with no exception on different estates, some of which were not even in the Meenachil taluk. One of these new licenses was issued to an employé on Woodlands Estate without

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the knowledge or consent of the Manager, and that made matters worse. There were about Rs. 4,000 given out in store money every week in the district and more than half of the amount went into the arrack taverns. The Member therefore requested that the shops at Maimallay and Kuttikanum might be closed and that no others be allowed in the district, and that the seven new licenses might also be cancelled.

Dewan's reply.—In regard to the seven new arrack shops, I understand that the Excise Commissioner has already received a complaint from a neighbouring renter and is taking action to close them. The two old shops at Maimallay and Kuttikanum cannot be disturbed during the currency of the present lease, which expires only by the end of 1084. In future years, before granting new leases, the Excise Commissioner will be asked to inform the Association of the sites where the shops are proposed to be located and allow the Association an opportunity of giving their views on the matter. But it should be distinctly understood that Government are not bound to fix the sites of shops only at places approved of by the Association.

61. *Alteration of the Peermade Magistrate's jurisdiction.*

Mr. H. D. Deane (Member, Rubber Planters' Association) said that the inconvenience and loss of time and money, owing to the very vague boundaries published in the Gazette of 1053 as being the boundaries between Kanjirapalli and the Peermade division of the Cardamom Hills, was represented by him at the second and third sessions of the Assembly and that early action was promised. The District Magistrate, Cardamom Hills, inspected the boundaries in July last, and he was in favour of making the watershed of the Pulagai Aur river, north of the Kumili road, the western boundary as far as the source of the Meenachil river, and on the south of the Kumili road from the Mundakayam large bridge along the Nedumthodu to its junction with Athampan Thodu, thence along the main ridge to Kombukattu and Chennapara elephant pits, and thence east along the Mathumba thodu and the northern boundary of the Rani Reserve to meet the Chenganmur-Changanachery taluk boundary, thence east to Chavarimalai. The proposed boundaries would be very convenient and would include all the rubber estates owned by Europeans, except the estates of Mundakayam and Vallenardie, the proprietors of which estates would like their surveyed acreage also, if possible, included as a special concession, at any rate as a temporary measure. In connection with the question of magisterial jurisdiction, he pointed out that, in the very near future, the population in

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